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SECRETARY BOWLES URGES EPA TO APPROVE WAIVER FOR MOTOR VEHICLE GREENHOUSE GAS REGULATIONS

Joins Massachusetts congressional delegation in calling for action

BOSTON – Friday, April 27, 2007 – Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles today sent a letter urging the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to approve California's waiver under the federal Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from new cars and light trucks. The waiver request has been pending at EPA since December 21, 2005.

In the letter, Secretary Bowles pointed out that Massachusetts is one of 11 states that have exercised their option of adopting California's emission standards as their own. If California's waiver is not granted by October 2007, the Massachusetts greenhouse gas standards will not be in place, as scheduled, for 2009 models, which go on sale in 2008.

"Motor vehicles are responsible for 25 percent of greenhouse gas emissions," said Secretary Bowles. "By state law, Massachusetts is following California's lead on curtailing these emissions from new cars and light trucks. It is vital that the EPA act expeditiously and approve California's waiver request."

The Massachusetts congressional delegation has also sent a letter pushing for the EPA to sign off on the California waiver request.

"The EPA has dragged its feet on global warming too long," said U.S. Rep. Edward Markey, chairman of the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming and dean of the state's House delegation. "There's no reason for it to drag down California and my home state along with it when they want to take action."

Because California had in place auto pollution regulations prior to the federal law, the Clean Air Act allows California to set emission standards that are more stringent than those imposed

nationally by the EPA. The law also allows other states to adopt California's standards in place of the federal standards. Since 1990, state law has required Massachusetts to keep its auto emissions regulations consistent with California's.

Each time California changes its auto emissions standards, it is required to file a waiver request with the EPA. In 2004, California established a regulation that, once fully implemented, will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles by 30 percent. The Massachusetts regulation modeled after California's would reduce these emissions 18 percent by 2020 and 24 percent by 2030.

In December 2005, California submitted its waiver request. By law, the EPA had 180 days to act on the request, but has only recently scheduled a public hearing for May 22. The California Air Resources Board has notified the EPA of its intent to file suit should the agency not act on the waiver request in a timely manner.

Currently, EPA does not regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act. On April 2, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in a case for which the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was the lead plaintiff, that greenhouse gases are pollutants, and that the EPA has the authority and the responsibility to regulate auto emissions of greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act.

"In the absence of federal action on auto emissions of greenhouse gases, the states have had to take the lead," said Secretary Bowles. "The least the EPA can do now is to grant California its waiver, and let states like Massachusetts begin to curb these harmful emissions."

[View the Secretary's Letter](#)

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